

during times of national disasters and emergencies.

Together they have successfully identified and transported sandbags, blankets, cots, tools, trucks and other equipment and supplies to disaster sites.

In 1997, the state agencies and their federal partners faced a number of emergencies—and they delivered.

And I know Minnesotans who suffered through the Midwest floods last year appreciated the relief provided to them during these horrible times. I recently received a letter from Dave Allen, Chief Pilot of the Minnesota State Patrol, and a recipient of surplus property distributed by the Minnesota State Agency for Surplus Property for the last several years.

Mr. Allen wrote:

In February 1997 our unit had the need for a twin engine airplane. One week after I made the request for this type of aircraft, Gene Glaeser called and said he had located an aircraft he thought would meet our needs. It was a Beechcraft Queen Air and it had been used by NASA for several years and was based at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia.

The Beechcraft Queen Air acquired from NASA including the training of six pilots cost the State approximately \$35,000 to place it in service. This aircraft had been appraised at \$150,000–\$175,000 by an aircraft broker . . . Had the surplus property program not been available to us our chances of acquiring this equipment would not have existed.

This is a perfect example of our government obtaining the most from a piece of equipment . . . I would hope that this program would continue for many years in the future, as everyone benefits from it.

The plane filled a very important need during last year's floods by shuttling state and emergency management staff to meetings, where they assessed the damage in our communities and provided guidance to residents.

The state agencies for surplus property should be commended for following the intent of Congress and fulfilling their responsibilities under Public Law 94-519. However, I believe that the volume and value of distributed surplus federal property would increase if the intent of the Congress when it passed the 1976 reforms was more closely followed.

If Congress continues to allow surplus federal property to go abroad, or not make its way through proper channels to eligible recipients, our students, workers, taxpayers, and families will lose. The legislation I am introducing will address these concerns through the following provisions.

First, this legislation would ensure that when distributing surplus federal property, domestic needs are met before we consider foreign interests. It would, however, grant the President the authority to make supplies available for humanitarian relief purposes before going to the states, in the case of emergencies or natural disasters.

Second, my bill would amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to prohibit the transfer of Government-owned excess property to foreign coun-

tries or international organizations for environmental protection activities in foreign countries unless GSA determined that there is no federal or state use for the property.

Fourth, my bill would repeal the authority of the Secretary of Energy to transfer excess DOE research and development facility equipment to educational institutions in the U.S. This current practice by DOE falls outside the Donation Program and denies equal access to all local education agencies, schools and universities.

Third, it would ensure that 8(a) firms participating in the Small Business Administration's Capital Ownership Development Program maintain their eligibility to receive surplus Federal property, but through the normal process involving GSA and the State agencies. States, not bureaucracies, should determine how to meet the needs of our schools and universities.

Finally, this legislation would require GSA to report to Congress on the effectiveness of all statutes relating to the disposal and donation of personal property and recommend any changes that would further improve the Donation Program.

Mr. President, my bill is based on the principle that eligible recipients should be able to maximize their tax dollars through expendable Federal property that meets their needs.

It takes an important step toward stopping publicly-owned property from being shipped abroad and given to other organizations before it is distributed through each State agency for surplus property.

My legislation will fulfill the public's right to know how and where their tax dollars are being spent.

In many ways, it will serve as the second phase of the reforms overwhelmingly passed by Congress in 1976, by preserving the active role of States in the handling and distribution of surplus Federal property. This initiative will benefit thousands of recipients—the Nation's taxpayers.

The best interests of America's taxpayers has always been at the top of my agenda. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate to move this legislation through Congress and give the taxpayers the highest possible return on their investment.

NOMINATION OF MARGARET MORROW

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, it is my understanding that tomorrow we are going to be voting on the confirmation of Mrs. Margaret Morrow, Judge Margaret Morrow, who has been nominated for the position of U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California. While I will be opposing her nomination, it is not because of her academic qualifications, nor her credentials, but her philosophy that she has expressed in the past from the bench.

Lately a lot of people have said that the state of our judiciary is somewhat

deplorable, and I think it is, although I do not think it is because of the lack of judges being confirmed. I do not think that is the problem. I think it is the philosophy, the dangerous philosophy of elitism which pervades the judicial branch of the Federal Government. This elitism is dangerous and undercuts our belief in courts throughout America. Regrettably, Mrs. Morrow is representative of that elitism.

I am most concerned more than anything else with statements she has made about direct democracy. It seems to be her position that we in America are not able to rule for ourselves, not able to make intelligent decisions, but those decisions would have to be made in some protected ivory tower. She condemns direct democracy. She says, "Ballot initiatives," and this is a quote, "render ephemeral any real hope of intelligent voting of the majority."

What she is saying here is that the people are not capable of making these decisions. And, of course, they do have problems out there in the ninth circuit, and the position she is seeking to gain would put her in a position to actually promote some of those things that have been taking place there.

Recently, in *Bates v. Jones*, a three-judge panel—Reinhardt, Sneed, and Fletcher—affirmed a decision by Judge Wilkins to throw out California's ballot initiative, Proposition 140—that's the term limits for State officials—declaring them unconstitutional.

There have been other efforts such as proposition 209. Last year Judge Henderson struck down the voter-approved referendum ending State affirmative action programs, and fortunately for the 20 million California voters Henderson's original ruling has been struck down, restoring their faith in the voting process.

Proposition 187. Judge Richard Pfaelzer declared a State law denying benefits to illegal aliens unconstitutional because it conflicted with the 1996 welfare reform law. That was overturned.

Proposition 208. Judge Carlton has recently blocked enforcement of the popular initiative that has imposed limits on campaign contributions at the State level.

During her confirmation, Mrs. Morrow claimed never to have publicly opposed a ballot initiative in the past decade with one exception and that was proposition 209. In fact, in 1988, Morrow wrote an article urging lawyers to support or oppose various ballot initiatives. She denounces three others later that year and spoke publicly against two others. So I think it is fairly evident that Margaret Morrow, in addition to these problems, has a problem with the truth. And I certainly think if there is anything we do not need in our judiciary it is someone of that philosophy.

I like the way Senator ASHCROFT said it the other day. He said, "Morrow's writings make it clear that she believes people cannot be trusted with

the fundamental powers of self-government."

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, February 9, 1998, the Federal debt stood at \$5,468,966,737,716.36 (Five trillion, four hundred sixty-eight billion, nine hundred sixty-six million, seven hundred thirty-seven thousand, seven hundred sixteen dollars and thirty-six cents).

Five years ago, February 9, 1993, the Federal debt stood at \$4,173,624,000,000 (Four trillion, one hundred seventy-three billion, six hundred twenty-four million).

Ten years ago, February 9, 1988, the Federal debt stood at \$2,545,424,000,000 (Two trillion, five hundred forty-five billion, four hundred twenty-four million).

Fifteen years ago, February 9, 1983, the Federal debt stood at \$1,192,294,000,000 (One trillion, one hundred ninety-two billion, two hundred ninety-four million).

Twenty-five years ago, February 9, 1973, the Federal debt stood at \$448,265,000,000 (Four hundred forty-eight billion, two hundred sixty-five million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,020,701,737,716.36 (Five trillion, twenty billion, seven hundred one million, seven hundred thirty-seven thousand, seven hundred sixteen dollars and thirty-six cents) during the past 25 years.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN WARNER ON THE NATO EXPANSION AMENDMENT

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, Senators WARNER and LEVIN are absent from the Senate this week so that they can accompany Secretary of Defense Cohen on his trip to the Persian Gulf. They are representing the Armed Services Committee on this important trip, and will report their findings to the Committee and to the Senate leadership.

During his absence, Senator WARNER has requested that I insert the following statement in the RECORD on his behalf. I am happy to do this for my colleague. I ask unanimous consent that Senator WARNER's statement be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATEMENT OF SENATOR WARNER—NATO EXPANSION AMENDMENT

This past weekend I was privileged to attend the annual Wehrkunde Conference in Munich, Germany. A main topic of discussion at this NATO security conference was the issue of NATO expansion. I have consistently expressed my sincere concerns with this policy.

NATO has been the most valuable and successful military alliance in the

history of this Nation. It has worked far beyond the expectations of its founders—keeping peace in Europe for 50 years, and securing victory in the cold war. President Truman cited NATO and the Marshall Plan as the greatest achievements of his presidency. I am concerned that we not do anything to undermine the effectiveness of this great alliance.

Recently, the Senate Armed Services Committee received testimony from former Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on the issue of NATO expansion. Although both said that the Senate should provide its advice and consent for the first round of expansion, they expressed a number of concerns. Secretary Schlesinger called this first round of NATO expansion "a bad idea whose time has come." And Secretary Kissinger warned that we are in danger of transforming NATO into a "U.N.-type instrument" if expansion is not handled properly.

It seems clear that this first round of expansion will go forward as planned. My concern is that we build in a mechanism to guard against precipitous, future expansion rounds.

During the Wehrkunde Conference, I had the opportunity to discuss an idea I have been contemplating to establish a moratorium—of 3 to 5 years—on new members being invited to join the NATO alliance, following the likely addition of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in 1999. In my view, such a moratorium is crucial to allow NATO to begin the process of integrating the three new nations, and more fully assess the impact of this integration before proceeding with further expansion rounds.

The purpose of this statement today is to promptly inform my colleagues of my discussions in Germany and my intent, upon returning from the trip with Secretary Cohen, to submit to the Senate for consideration an amendment which will establish a 3-year moratorium on future NATO expansions. This amendment will be drafted as a condition to the resolution of ratification, and will effectively prevent the United States from agreeing to any further expansion of the NATO alliance for a period of three years.

I will make a full set of remarks on this amendment and seek co-sponsors following my return. I look forward to engaging in an extended debate on this issue—and other aspects of NATO expansion—in the weeks to come.

I thank Senator THURMOND for assisting me in making this statement a part of the RECORD during my absence on official business as part of Secretary Cohen's delegation to the Persian Gulf and Russia.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

1998 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 96

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Joint Economic Committee.

To the Congress of the United States:

For the last 5 years this Administration has worked to strengthen our Nation for the 21st century, expanding opportunity for all Americans, demanding responsibility from all Americans, and bringing us together as a community of all Americans. Building a strong economy is the cornerstone of our efforts to meet these challenges.

When I first took office in 1993, the Federal budget deficit was out of control, unemployment was unacceptably high, and wages were stagnant. To reverse this course, we took a new approach, putting in place a bold economic strategy designed to bring down the deficit and give America's workers the tools and training they need to help them thrive in our changing economy.

Our strategy has succeeded: the economy has created more than 14 million new jobs, unemployment is at its lowest level in 24 years, and core inflation is at its lowest level in 30 years. Economic growth in 1997 was the strongest in almost a decade, and the benefits of that growth are being shared by all Americans: poverty is dropping and median family income has gone up nearly \$2,200 since 1993. We also saw the biggest drop in welfare rolls in history. Many challenges remain, but Americans are enjoying the fruits of an economy that is steady and strong.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S ECONOMIC STRATEGY

From the beginning, this Administration's economic strategy has had three crucial elements: reducing the deficit, investing in people, and opening markets abroad.

Deficit reduction. In 1993 this Administration's deficit reduction plan set the Nation on a course of fiscal responsibility, while making critical investments in the skills and well-being of our people. When I took office, the deficit was \$290 billion and projected to go much higher. This year the deficit will fall to just \$10 billion and possibly lower still. That is a reduction of more than 95 percent, leaving the deficit today smaller in relation to the size of the economy than it has been since 1969.